



Glossary

Frequently Used Terms for Levees

The terms listed below will regularly be encountered by FEMA mapping partners, stakeholders, and users that are actively involved in the Flood Map Modernization Program, particularly those interested in the evaluation and mapping of levees.

0.2-Percent-Annual-Chance Flood—The flood that has a 0.2-percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year.

1-Percent-Annual-Chance Flood— The flood that has a 1-percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year.

2-Percent-Annual-Chance Flood—The flood that has a 2-percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year.

10-Percent-Annual-Chance Flood—The flood that has a 10-percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year.

10-Year Flood—See 10-Percent-Annual-Chance Flood.

50-Year Flood—See 2-Percent-Annual-Chance Flood.

100-Year Flood—See 1-Percent-Annual-Chance Flood.

500-Year Flood—See 0.2-Percent-Annual-Chance Flood

Accredited Levee— A levee that the Federal Emergency Management Agency has shown on the Flood Insurance Rate Map as providing protection from the 1-percent-annual-chance or greater flood. This determination is based on the submittal of data and documentation as required by Section 65.10 of the National Flood Insurance Program regulations. The area landward of an accredited levee is shown as Zone X (shaded) except for areas of residual flooding, such as ponding areas, which will be shown as Special Flood Hazard Area.

Appeal—The formal objection to proposed or proposed modified Base Flood Elevations (BFEs), submitted by a community official or an owner or lessee of real property within the community during the statutory 90-day appeal period. An appeal must be based on data that show the proposed or proposed modified BFEs are scientifically or technically incorrect.

Appeal Period—The statutory period, beginning on the date of second publication of proposed BFEs and/or proposed modified BFEs in the local newspaper, during which community officials or owners or lessees of real property within the community may appeal proposed or proposed modified BFEs by submitting data to show those BFEs are scientifically or technically incorrect.

Application Forms—The comprehensive, easy-to-use forms that were implemented by FEMA in October 1992 to facilitate the processing of requests for revisions or amendments to National Flood Insurance Program maps.





Approved Model—A numerical computer model that has been accepted by FEMA for use in performing new or revised hydrologic or hydraulic analyses for National Flood Insurance Program purposes. All accepted models must meet the requirements set forth in Subparagraph 65.6(a)(6) of the National Flood Insurance Program regulations.

Approximate Study—A flood hazard study that results in the delineation of floodplain boundaries for the 1-percent-annual-chance (100-year) flood, but does not include the determination of BFEs or flood depths.

As-Built—A term used to describe mapping and mapping-related data that reflect conditions within a floodplain based on flood-control and other structures being completed.

Base Flood—The flood that has a 1-percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year.

Base Flood Elevation (BFE) —The elevation of a flood having a 1-percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year.

Building—See Structure.

Channel—A naturally or artificially created open conduit that periodically or continuously contains moving water or which forms a connecting link between two bodies of water.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)—The official of a community who has the authority to implement and administer laws, ordinances, and regulations for that community.

Coastal Flooding—Flooding that occurs along the Great Lakes, the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, and the Gulf of Mexico.

Coastal High Hazard Area—An area of special flood hazard extending from offshore to the inland limit of a primary frontal dune along an open coast and any other area subject to high-velocity wave actions from storms or seismic sources.

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)—The codification of the general and permanent rules published in the *Federal Register* by the Executive Departments and agencies of the Federal Government. National Flood Insurance Program regulations are printed in Parts 59 through 77 of Title 44 of the CFR.

Community—Any State or area or political subdivision thereof, or any Indian tribe or authorized tribal organization, or Alaska Native village or authorized native organization, which has the authority to adopt and enforce floodplain management regulations for the areas within its jurisdiction.

Community Assistance Call (CAC)—A telephone call made by FEMA Regional Office staff or the State National Flood Insurance Program Coordinator to a community to supplement or replace a Community Assistance Visit.

Community Assistance Program (CAP)—A FEMA program, funded by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), under which cost-shared funds are provided to States to provide technical assistance support to communities participating in the NFIP. The purpose of the CAP is to identify, prevent, and resolve floodplain management issues in NFIP participating communities before a flood occurs, or before poor performance or noncompliance warrant enforcement and intervention by FEMA.

Community Assistance Visit (CAV)—A visit by FEMA Regional Office staff or the State National Flood Insurance Program Coordinator to a community to assess whether the community's floodplain management program meets National Flood Insurance Program participation requirements.



Community Coordination Meeting—A meeting during which Flood Hazard Mapping Partners discuss plans for a Flood Map Project, interim results of a Flood Map Project, and final results of a Flood Map Project for a particular community or group of communities.

Community Rating System (CRS)—A FEMA initiative, established under the National Flood Insurance Program, to recognize and reward communities that have implemented floodplain management measures beyond the minimum required by National Flood Insurance Program regulations. Under the CRS, those communities that choose to participate voluntarily may reduce the flood insurance premium rates for property owners in the community by taking these additional actions.

Compliance Period—The period that begins with the issuance of a Letter of Final Determination and ends when a new or revised Flood Insurance Rate Map becomes effective. During the compliance period, a community must enact and adopt new or revised floodplain management ordinances required for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program.

Consultation Coordination Officer (CCO)—The individual on the FEMA Regional Office staff who is responsible for coordinating with a community on activities related to National Flood Insurance Program.

Cooperating Technical Partners (CTP) Program—An innovative FEMA program to create partnerships between FEMA and participating National Flood Insurance Program communities, regional agencies, and State agencies that have the interest and capability to become more active participants in the FEMA Flood Map Modernization program.

Countywide Format—A format used by FEMA to show flooding information for the entire geographic area of a county, including the incorporated communities in the county, on one map and in one report.

Cultural Features—Railroads, airfields, streets, roads, highways, levees, dikes, seawalls, dams and other flood-control structures, and other prominent manmade features and landmarks shown on a National Flood Insurance Program map.

De-Accredited Levee—A levee that was once shown on the Flood Insurance Rate Map as providing protection from the 1-percent-annual-chance or greater flood, but is no longer credited with providing this protection because FEMA has not been provided with sufficient data and documentation to determine that the levee continues to meet the requirements of Section 65.10 of the National Flood Insurance Program regulations. The area landward of a de-accredited levee is shown as a Special Flood Hazard Area.

Detailed Study—A flood hazard study that, at a minimum, results in the delineation of floodplain boundaries for the 1-percent-annual-chance (100-year) flood and the determination of BFEs or flood depths.

Digital Data—Data displayed, recorded, or stored in binary notation.

Digital Elevation Model (DEM)—A file with terrain elevations recorded for the intersection of a fine-grained grid and organized by quadrangle as the digital equivalent of the elevation data on a topographic base map.

Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM)—A Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) that has been prepared as a digital product, which may involve converting an existing manually produced FIRM to digital format, or creating a product from new digital data sources using a Geographic Information System environment. The DFIRM product allows for the creation of interactive, multi-hazard digital maps. Linkages are built into an associated database to allow users options to access the engineering backup material used to develop the DFIRM, such as hydrologic and hydraulic models, Flood Profiles, data tables, DEMs, and structure-specific data, such as digital elevation certificates and digital photographs of bridges and culverts.

Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM) Spatial Database—A database designed to facilitate collecting, storing, processing, and accessing data developed by FEMA, enabling Mapping Partners to share the data necessary for the



DFIRM production and conversion process. Where possible, all mapping and engineering data elements are linked to physical geographic features and georeferenced. The use of a Geographic Information System as a component of the DFIRM spatial database provides the ability to georeference and overlay the mapping and engineering data, allowing the database to support a wide variety of existing and forthcoming FEMA engineering and mapping products.

Digital Orthophoto Quadrangle (DOQ)—Photographic maps distributed by the U.S. Geological Survey. A DOQ is an aerial photograph that is adjusted to remove distortions caused by variations in terrain and the camera lens to produce a photograph that displays features in their planimetrically correct location. This term is sometimes used loosely to mean any photographic map produced by this process.

Digital Terrain Model (DTM)—A land surface represented in digital form by an elevation grid or lists of three-dimensional coordinates.

Effective Date—The date on which the National Flood Insurance Program Map for a community becomes effective and all sanctions of the National Flood Insurance Program apply.

Effective Map—The National Flood Insurance Program map issued by FEMA that is in effect as of the date shown in the title block of the map as “Effective Date,” “Revised,” or “Map Revised.”

Emergency Phase—The phase of the National Flood Insurance Program that was implemented, on an emergency basis, to provide a first-layer amount of insurance on all insurable structures before the effective date of the initial Flood Insurance Study and Flood Insurance Rate Map.

Emergency Program—See Emergency Phase.

Encroachment—Construction, placement of fill, or similar alteration of topography in the floodplain that reduces the area available to convey floodwaters.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)—The component of the Emergency Preparedness and Response Directorate within the U.S. Department of Homeland security that oversees the administration of the National Flood Insurance Program.

FEMA Levee Inventory System (FLIS)—A Web-based database and information retrieval system used by FEMA to collect and maintain information on structures shown on effective and soon-to-be-effective Flood Insurance Rate Maps, including levees, dikes, floodwalls, and road and railroad embankments.

FEMA Map Assistance Center (FMAC)—A FEMA customer service center staffed by Map Specialists that are specially trained to answer specific questions about NFIP mapping and related issues, including: levee resources; status of active and completed studies/mapping projects, conditional and final map revision requests, and conditional and final map amendment requests; technical and administrative support data available from the FEMA archives. FMAC Map Specialists will link callers with other FEMA service and fax numbers and the FEMA website and provide information regarding, or copies of, FEMA products, brochures, and publications.

Federal Register—The document, published daily by the Federal Government, that presents regulation changes and legal notices issued by Federal agencies. FEMA publications in the Federal Register include Proposed, Interim, and Final Rules for BFE determinations; Compendium of Flood Map Changes published twice each year; Final Rules concerning community eligibility for the sale of flood insurance; and Notices announcing clarifications of procedures and requirements.

Fill—Soil that is brought in to raise the level of the ground. Depending on where the soil is placed, fill may change the flow of water or increase flood elevations. Fill may be used to elevate a building to meet National Flood Insurance



Program requirements. Sometimes fill is combined with other methods of elevation such as pilings or foundation walls. Placement of fill requires a local permit from the community.

Fiscal Year—The 12-month period that begins on October 1 and ends on September 30.

Flood—A general and temporary condition of partial or complete inundation of normally dry land areas from (1) the overflow of inland or tidal waters or (2) the unusual and rapid accumulation or runoff of surface waters from any source.

Flood Elevation Determination Docket (FEDD) — A file maintained by FEMA that includes all correspondence between FEMA and the community concerning a flood study; reports of meetings held among FEMA representatives, community representatives, the State NFIP Coordinator, private citizens, FEMA and community contractors, or other interested parties; relevant publications (e.g., newspaper notices, Federal Register notices); Letter of Final Determination; a copy of the Flood Insurance Study report; and a copy of the Flood Insurance Rate Map and FBFM.

Flood Hazard Boundary Map (FHBM)—The initial insurance map issued by FEMA that identifies, based on approximate analyses, the areas of the 1-percent-annual-chance (100-year) flood hazard within a community.

Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM)—The insurance and floodplain management map produced by FEMA that identifies, based on detailed or approximate analyses, the areas subject to flooding during a 1-percent-annual-chance (100-year) flood event in a community. Flood insurance risk zones, which are used to compute actuarial flood insurance rates, also are shown. In areas studied by detailed analyses, the FIRM shows Base Flood Elevations (BFEs) to reflect the elevations of the 1-percent-annual-chance flood. For many communities, when detailed analyses are performed, the FIRM also may show areas inundated by 0.2-percent-annual-chance (500-year) flood and regulatory floodway areas.

Flood Insurance Rate Zones— See Flood Insurance Risk Zones.

Flood Insurance Risk Zones—The zones, also referred to as “risk premium rate zones” and “flood insurance rate zones,” shown on a FIRM or FHBM that are used to determine flood insurance premium rates for properties in the community covered by the FIRM or FHBM. The flood insurance risk zones include Special Flood Hazard Areas (i.e., Zones A, A1-30, AE, A0, A99, AH, AR, AR/A, AR/A1-30, AR/AE, AR/A99, V, V1-30, VE, V0) and areas outside Special Flood Hazard Areas (i.e., Zones B, X, D, M, N, P, E).

Flood Insurance Study (FIS) Report—A document, prepared and issued by FEMA, that documents the results of the detailed flood hazard assessment performed for a community. The primary components of the FIS report are text, data tables, photographs, and Flood Profiles.

Flood Map Modernization (Map Mod) Program—The multiyear program undertaken by FEMA to perform flood hazard assessments and produce new or updated DFIRMs and FIS reports for floodprone communities throughout the United States.

Floodplain—Any land area that is susceptible to being inundated by water from any source.

Floodplain Management—The operation of a program of corrective and preventative measures for reducing flood damage, including, but not limited to, emergency preparedness plans, flood-control works, and floodplain management regulations.

Floodplain Management Regulations—The zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations, building codes, health regulations, special-purpose ordinances, and other applications of enforcement used by a community to manage development in its floodplain areas.

Floodprone Area—See Floodplain.



Floodprone Community—Any community that is subject to inundation by the base (100-year) flood.

Flood Profile—A graph showing the relationship of water-surface elevation to location, with the latter generally expressed as distance above the mouth for a stream of water flowing in an open channel.

Flood Protection System—Those physical works for which funds have been authorized, appropriated, and expended and which have been constructed specifically to modify flooding in order to reduce the extent of the area subject to a “special flood hazard” and the extent of the depths of the associated flooding. Flood protection systems typically include hurricane tidal barriers, dams, reservoirs, levees, or dikes.

Floodway—See Regulatory Floodway.

Floodway Fringe—The portion of the 1-percent-annual-chance (100-year) floodplain that is not within the regulatory floodway and in which development and other forms of encroachment may be permitted under certain circumstances.

Freeboard—A factor of safety usually expressed in feet above a flood level for purposes of floodplain management.

Geographic Information System (GIS)—A system of computer hardware, software, and procedures designed to support the capture, management, manipulation, analysis, modeling, and display of spatially referenced data for solving complex planning and management problems.

Hazard—An event or physical condition that has the potential to cause fatalities, injuries, property damage, infrastructure damage, agricultural loss, damage to the environment, interruption of business, and other types of loss or harm.

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)—The program, authorized under Section 404 of the Stafford Act, under which FEMA provides grants to States and local governments to implement long-term hazard mitigation measures after a presidential disaster declaration. The purpose of the HMGP is to reduce the loss of life and property due to natural disasters and to enable mitigation measures to be implemented during the immediate recovery from a presidentially declared disaster.

Headquarters (HQ) —The FEMA office in Washington, DC.

Hydraulic Analysis—An engineering analysis of a flooding source carried out to provide estimates of the elevations of floods of selected recurrence intervals.


Hydraulic Computer Model—A computer program that uses flood discharge values and floodplain characteristic data to simulate flow conditions and determine flood elevations.

Hydraulic Methodology—Analytical methodology used for assessing the movement and behavior of floodwaters and determining flood elevations and regulatory floodway data.

Hydrograph—A graph showing stage, flow, velocity, or other properties of water with respect to time.

Hydrologic Analysis— An engineering analysis of a flooding source carried out to establish peak flood discharges and their frequencies of occurrence.

Hydrology—The science encompassing the behavior of water as it occurs in the atmosphere, on the surface of the ground, and underground.



Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity Contractor (IDIQ)—An architectural and engineering firm or a Federal, State, or local agency that performs flood hazard studies under contract with FEMA as part of the FEMA Flood Map Modernization program.

Interior Drainage Systems—Systems associated with levee systems that usually include storage areas, gravity outlets, pumping stations, or a combination thereof.

Legally Defined Parcel of Land—A parcel of land for which a metes and bounds description or a plat has been recorded. Structure may exist on legally defined parcels of land.

Letter of Final Determination (LFD)—The letter in which FEMA announces its final determination regarding the flood hazard information, including (when appropriate) proposed and proposed modified BFEs, presented on a new or revised DFIRM and FIS report. By issuing the LFD, FEMA begins the compliance period and establishes the effective date for the new or revised DFIRM and FIS report.

Letter of Map Change—A collective term used to describe official amendments and revisions to National Flood Insurance maps that are accomplished by a cost-effective administrative procedure and disseminated by letter.

Levee—A a man-made structure, usually an earthen embankment, designed and constructed in accordance with sound engineering practices to contain, control, or divert the flow of water so as to provide protection from temporary flooding.

Local Newspaper—The community newspaper, identified by the CEO or other designated community official, in which FEMA publishes notices at the beginning of a Flood Map Project, at the beginning of the appeal period, and at other times during the processing of a new or revised FIRM when required.

Lot—A parcel of land for which a metes and bounds description or a plat has been recorded and on which one or more structures may be built.

Lowest Adjacent Grade (LAG)—The lowest natural elevation of the ground surface next to a structure.

Lowest Finished Floor Elevation (LFFE)—The lowest floor of the lowest enclosed area (including basement) of a structure.

Manufactured Home—Any building that is transportable in one or more sections, which is built on a permanent chassis and designed to be used with or without a permanent foundation when connected to the required utilities. Park trailers, recreational vehicles, and other similar vehicles are not considered manufactured homes.

Map Amendment—A change to an effective National Flood Insurance Program map that results in the exclusion from the Special Flood Hazard Area of an individual structure or legally defined parcel of land that has been inadvertently included in the Special Flood Hazard Area (i.e., no alterations of topography have occurred since the date of the first National Flood Insurance Program map that showed the structure or parcel to be within the Special Flood Hazard Area.

Mapping Needs Update Support System (MNUSS)—The computerized database system that is used by FEMA and its Flood Hazard Mapping Partners to compile information on mapping needs nationwide collected using the Mapping Needs Assessment Process.

Mapping Activity Statement (MAS)—An agreement signed by FEMA and a participant (community, regional agency, or State agency) in the CTP program under which the participant will complete specific mapping activities.



Mapping Project—Any activity undertaken by FEMA or a mapping partner to create a new or updated DFIRM, including detailed studies, approximate studies, and floodplain boundary redelineations based on updated topographic information.

Map Revision—A change to an effective National Flood Insurance Program map that is accomplished by a LOMR or a Physical Map Revision.

Mitigation—A sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and property from flood hazards and their effects. Mitigation distinguishes actions that have a long-term impact from those more closely associated with preparedness for, immediate response to, and short-term recovery from specific events.

Mitigation Division—The component of FEMA Homeland Security that, among other responsibilities, administers the National Flood Insurance Program.

National Flood Insurance Fund (NFIF) —The fund used as the funding mechanism for the National Flood Insurance Program.

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) — Federal Program under which flood-prone areas are identified and flood insurance is made available to the owners of the property in participating communities.

Non-Participating Community—A community that has been identified by FEMA as being floodprone but has chosen not to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program.

Participating Community—Any community that voluntarily elects to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program by adopting and enforcing floodplain management regulations that are consistent with the standards of the National Flood Insurance Program.

Permanent Identifier (PID)—The six-character alphanumeric code used by the National Geodetic Survey to identify control points and stations.

Ponding—The result of runoff or flows collecting in a depression that may have no outlet, subterranean outlets, rim outlets, or manmade outlets such as culverts or pumping stations. Impoundments behind manmade obstructions are included in this type of shallow flooding as long as they are not backwater from a defined channel or do not exceed 3.0 feet in depth.

Procedure Memorandum (PM)—A memorandum issued by FEMA to clarify mapping-related procedures, particularly procedures documented in FEMA's *Guidelines and Specifications for Flood Hazard Mapping Partners*.

Proposed Base Flood Elevations/Depths and Proposed Modified Base Flood Elevations/Depths—Those new and modified BFEs and base flood depths that FEMA publishes in a local newspaper and in the *Federal Register* at the start of the 90-day appeal period.

Protest—An objection to any information, other than BFEs, shown on an NFIP map that is submitted by community officials or interested citizens through the community officials during the 90-day appeal period.

Provisionally Accredited Levee (PAL)— A levee that FEMA has previously credited with providing 1-percent-annual-chance protection on an effective FIRM or DFIRM, for which FEMA is awaiting data and/or documentation that will show the levee's compliance with Section 65.10 of the NFIP regulations. A PAL is shown on a DFIRM as providing 1-percent-annual-chance flood protection, and the area landward of the levee is shown as Zone X (shaded) **except for areas of residual flooding, such as ponding areas, which will be shown as Special Flood Hazard Area.**

Recurrence Interval—The average interval of time within which a given flood will be equaled or exceeded once.



Regional Offices (ROs)—The FEMA offices located in Boston, Massachusetts; New York, New York; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Atlanta, Georgia; Chicago, Illinois; Denton, Texas; Kansas City, Missouri; Denver, Colorado; San Francisco, California; and Bothell, Washington.

Regular Phase—The phase of a community's participation in the National Flood Insurance Program when more comprehensive floodplain management requirements are imposed and higher amounts of insurance are available. The FIRM forms the basis for this phase of participation in the National Flood Insurance Program.

Regular Program—See Regular Phase.

Regulatory Floodway—A floodplain management tool that is the regulatory area defined as the channel of a stream, plus any adjacent floodplain areas, that must be kept free of encroachment so that the base flood discharge can be conveyed without increasing the BFEs more than a specified amount. The regulatory floodway is not an insurance rating factor.

Riverine Flooding—The overbank flooding of rivers and streams.

Scale—A representative fraction of a paper map distance to ground distance.

Sediment—Fragmental material that originates from the weathering of rocks and is transported by, suspended in, or deposited by water or air or is accumulated in beds by other natural occurrence.

Scientifically Incorrect Base Flood Elevations—Those Base Flood Elevations determined through analyses in which the methodologies used and/or assumptions made are inappropriate for the physical processes being evaluated or are otherwise erroneous.

Shallow Flooding—Unconfined flows over broad, relatively low relief areas, such as alluvial plains; intermittent flows in arid regions that have not developed a system of well-defined channels; overbank flows that remain unconfined, such as on delta formations; overland flow in urban areas; and flows collecting in depressions to form ponding areas. For National Flood Insurance Program purposes, shallow flooding conditions are defined as flooding that is limited to 3.0 feet or less in depth where no defined channel exists.

Sheet Runoff—The broad, relatively unconfined downslope movement of water across sloping terrain that results from many sources, including intense rainfall and/or snowmelt, overflow from a channel that crosses a drainage divide, and overflow from a perched channel onto deltas or plains of lower elevation. Sheet runoff is typical in areas of low topographic relief and poorly established drainage systems.

Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA)—The area delineated on a National Flood Insurance Program map as being subject to inundation by the base flood. SFHAs are determined using statistical analyses of records of riverflow, storm tides, and rainfall; information obtained through consultation with a community; floodplain topographic surveys; and hydrologic and hydraulic analyses.

Stage—The height of a water surface above an established datum plane.

State—Any State, the District of Columbia, the territories and possessions of the United States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

State Coordinating Agency— See State National Flood Insurance Program Coordinator.

State National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Coordinator—The agency of the State government, or other office designated by the Governor of the State or by State statute at the request of FEMA to assist in the implementation of the National Flood Insurance Program in that state.



State Plane Coordinates—A system of X,Y coordinates defined by the U.S. Geological Survey for each state. Locations are based on the distance from an origin within each state.

Stillwater Flood Elevation (SWEL)—Projected elevation that flood waters would assume, referenced to National Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1929, North American Vertical Datum of 1988, or other datum, in the absence of waves resulting from wind or seismic effects.

Stillwater Flood Level (SWFL)—Rise in the water surface above normal water level on the open coast due to the action of wind stress and atmospheric pressure on the water surface.

Structure—For floodplain management purposes, a walled and roofed building, including a gas or liquid storage tank that is principally above ground, as well as a manufactured home. For flood insurance purposes, a walled and roofed building, other than a gas or liquid storage tank, that is principally above ground and affixed to a permanent site, as well as a manufactured home on a permanent foundation.

Study Contractor (SC)—See Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity Contractor.

Subcritical Flow—Flow with a mean velocity that is less than the critical velocity; in other words, tranquil flow.

Supercritical Flow—Flow with a mean velocity that is greater than the critical velocity; in other words, rapid flow.

Tagged Information File Format (TIFF)—The technical exchange format for raster or image files.

Technically Incorrect Base Flood Elevations/Depths—Those BFEs and base flood depths determined through analyses in which the methodologies used have not been applied properly, are based on insufficient or poor-quality data, or do not account for the effects of physical changes that have occurred in the floodplain.

Temporary Bench Mark (TBM)—Benchmark established for a particular Flood Map Project or community.

Triangulated Irregular Network (TIN)—A set of non-overlapping triangles developed from irregularly spaced points that are used to represent the facets of a surface.

Unnumbered A Zones—Flood insurance rate zones, designated “Zone A” on a FIRM, that are based on approximate studies.

Velocity Zone—See Coastal High Hazard Area.

Violation—The failure of a structure or other development to be fully compliant with a community’s floodplain management regulations. A structure or other development without an Elevation Certificate, other certifications, or other evidence of compliance required in Section 60.3 of the National Flood Insurance Program regulations is presumed to be in violation until such time as that documentation is provided.

Watershed—An area of land that drains into a single outlet and is separated from other drainage basins by a divide.

Water-Surface Elevations (WSELs)—The heights of floods of various magnitudes and frequencies in the floodplains of coastal or riverine areas, in relation to a specified vertical datum.

Wave Height—Vertical distance between the wave crest and the wave trough.

Wave Runup—Rush of wave water up a slope or structure.



Wave Setup—The Increase in the still water surface near the shoreline, due to the presence of breaking waves.

Work Map—Floodplain mapping submitted to FEMA by a Mapping Partner, reflecting the results of a flood study or other mapping activity. The work map depicts floodplain boundaries, regulatory floodway boundaries, BFEs, and cross sections, and provides the basis for the presentation of this information on a FIRM.

Zone Gutter—Boundary, shown on a FIRM, dividing SFHAs of different BFEs, base flood depths, flow velocities, or flood insurance risk zone designations.